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THE SITUATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fiftieth year

Letter dated 17 July 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement by the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, H.E. Mr. László Kovács, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary, concerning the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 28 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) István NÁTHON
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Statement by the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Another humanitarian disaster is unfolding in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a consequence of the recent large-scale attack by the Bosnian Serbs, the United Nations-declared safe area of Srebrenica has fallen. Forty thousand civilian lives are now at risk. The situation in Zepa and Gorazde, two other safe areas, is also critical. The Dutch United Nations peace-keepers deployed in Srebrenica were forced to leave the town, together with thousands of fleeing civilians. A mere expression of outrage and condemnation is no longer enough.

The Bosnian Serb takeover of Srebrenica, the attacks launched against the civilian population and United Nations personnel there and in other safe areas, and the blockade of humanitarian deliveries to Sarajevo are elements of a larger, consistent pattern of Bosnian Serb repudiation of the United Nations and the international community as a whole, and of the rejection by Pale of all efforts at a peaceful settlement. With these actions, the Bosnian Serbs are sending a clear and defiant message to the world community. Those who are condoning, supporting or committing these unqualifiable actions, in blatant violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions, must be held accountable. The United Nations personnel detained by the Bosnian Serbs in Srebrenica must be immediately released. UNPROFOR's freedom of movement must be unconditionally ensured. The concept of safe areas has been fundamental to the United Nations presence in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was destined to be a means to provide security for the civilian populations there and to ensure their humanitarian support. It is worth recalling that events in Srebrenica were instrumental in the decision by the United Nations two years ago to introduce the very concept of safe areas in the country. Failure to provide protection to them and to stop yet another humanitarian tragedy raises the question of the viability of the entire concept. The international community should look for more adequate and efficient ways to ensure the continuation of its conflict-management activities in the former Yugoslavia as it seeks answers to some fundamental questions regarding its role and response to the unprecedented challenges stemming from this conflict. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe reiterates its readiness to continue to actively support all such efforts aimed at bringing peace and justice to this tormented region.